

DATA REGISTRY  
FILE: *Area Personnel*DD/A 79-2347/2  
13 DEC 1979STAT  
MEMORANDUM FOR: Chair, Opportunities for Career  
Development Panel

FROM:

Clifford D. May, Jr.  
Acting Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT:

Final Draft of Opportunities for Career  
Development Program

REFERENCE:

Your Memo; Same Subject; dtd 26 Nov 1979

1. The Directorate of Administration's Office Directors/Office Chiefs have reviewed the final draft on the Opportunities for Career Development Program (OCDP). Our overall reservations concerning the draft is that it is time consuming and bureaucratic for those involved in administering the program. Also, it will require an inordinate number of people to administer within the Directorate, such as component ranking panels, an ad hoc working group and members to OCDP. It seems probable that OCDP should share some of the workload it is passing off the other groups. We feel that there are many questions needing answers prior to implementation of the program.

2. Our views and comments are keyed to the draft paragraphs as indicated:

I. Purpose and Scope

It is our opinion that the purpose of the program needs to be better defined and the phrase, "long-term advancement opportunities" needs to be clarified. For instance, is the purpose of the OCDP to identify employees with potential for advancement to at least journeyman level once they acquire requisite skills through training and experience? If so, this should be stated or, if not, the purpose should be otherwise fully explained.

II. Administration

If OCDP is not sharing the workload levied on the component panels and ad hoc groups, what administrative duties will the OCDP perform? Also, if membership on

OCDP is two years, inclusion of a Secretarial/Clerical MAG member could be a problem since it is our understanding the MAG membership is for one year. How will the MAG member be selected?

### III. Program Eligibility

Based solely on the equation you have identified as the number of positions (28) under the auspices of the program and the number of applicants each directorate (DDA  ) can forward for ad hoc group consideration, we must assume that all interested applicants will apply for PETB/DAT testing. If we add totals of the other career services with applicants to be tested, the case load for PSS/OMS would be prohibitive. Also, we believe that employees should not be responsible or encouraged to schedule themselves for PETB/DAT testing. This has the potential of swamping PSS/OMS with requests. Therefore, we strongly believe that the OCDP should assume this responsibility for those applicants that pass the component panel screening. In addition, test scores will have to be interpreted in relationship to each of the three positions each applicant may apply for.

Is there any requirement for attaining a certain level of performance prior to application of the OCDP; (e.g., a rating of six or higher on the Performance Appraisal Report)?

### IV. Counseling

We recommend that the OCDP hold an employee counseling session for employees interested in OCDP to brief them on how to improve their competitiveness. This type of session is a more cost-effective method of communicating with the potentially large number of employees interested in the program. It will also provide a level of consistency and uniformity of information not possible in the decentralized approach proposed in the draft.

### V. Position Identification

The number of positions for OCDP allocated to each directorate and "E" Career Service seems to be too heavily weighted in favor of the DDA. We feel that the total number of OCDP positions in each career service should be based on the number of total positions in the career service, not on the number

of positions at the GS-07 to GS-10 level. If the total career service positions is used to determine the allocation of positions, the number of OCDP slots in the DDA would be nine instead of ten as proposed.

The second paragraph in this section is unclear to us. Specifically, what is meant by the reference to "additional positions that do not meet the primary criteria"? Are these clerical positions and how will such positions provide "reasonable career opportunity leading to professional or technical career path"? Are these positions in addition to the program's 28 positions and what purpose do you plan for them to serve?

The responsibility for action is not clear in the third paragraph, and the time allotted is not adequate. We suggest the following paragraph as a replacement: "Within 30 days of the DCI's annual directive, heads of Career Services will select appropriate positions and assign responsible supervisors to write detailed position descriptions (PD's). These PD's, as outlined in Tab B, should include specific qualifications, testing (such as DAT, PETB, Wolfe Programming Aptitude, and Morse Code Aptitude Test), and other special requirements, e.g., rotating shifts, overtime, etc. PD's will be forwarded through directorate EEO Officers to the OCDP for review. OCDP will provide consultation services to supervisors during PD development and ensure that the proposed positions meet Office of Personnel Management's requirements for Upward Mobility Programs. Other position criteria unclear to us is: Will components be required to identify different positions each year or may the same position be used? Also, if a position requires a two-year training program, will the component be asked to identify an additional position during the second year?

#### VI. Program Announcement and Application for Vacancies

This section does not make clear who is responsible for many critical actions, nor does it ensure that interested employees have the opportunity to receive briefings on the requirements for and opportunities in the OCDP positions being announced. Who

will prepare the vacancy forms and Applicant Evaluation Questionnaires and ensure that they are distributed to the component personnel offices?

#### VII. Program Selection

Component ranking panels vary from component to component. What provision will be made to ensure objective and equitable evaluations against the positions applied for? The OCDP makes no reference to personal interviews. At what point in the process will this be done, and what objective measures will be used to insure equitable interviews? What measures of behavioral job ability will be performed? PETB/DAT tests measure intellectual ability, work attitude, vocational interest, and personality traits; and while valuable measures, they should not be confused with behavioral job ability measures.

#### VIII. Training

Several places in this draft make reference to training (e.g. Section I, para. 2: "required academic training," and Section II, para. 4: "at least a year of intensive training." It might be appropriate in the above mentioned places to specify who pays for the academic training or add a proviso that training plans for an OCDP selectee should be but one part of each components overall training program for its staff. We suggest that a training specialist be added to OCDP panel to ensure that all suggested external training is appropriate for the positions occupied by program selectees.

#### IX. Progress Reports

No comment.

#### X. Promotion

On what basis can trainees be promoted and which career service panel will evaluate them? Also, will promotion of a trainee indicate completion of the program?

#### XI. Withdrawal from the Program

What channels are referred to by the statement "requests for withdrawal from the Program must be submitted through channels"? Suggest specific channels be described. Also, what happens to the employee in the interval between withdrawal and the time when a

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suitable position becomes available for which the employee is qualified?

2. We hope these comments are helpful in building the best Agency-wide Upward Mobility Program possible that serves the interests of all eligible employees and its mission. Overall, we were stunned by the heavy demands in administering this Program, especially in terms of the number of people involved to make up suggested panels, the review of applicant files, and the necessary testing that will take place. Hopefully, after one or two runnings of the Program, ideas for streamlining will become apparent for future runnings.

/s/ C. D. May

Clifford D. May, Jr.

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